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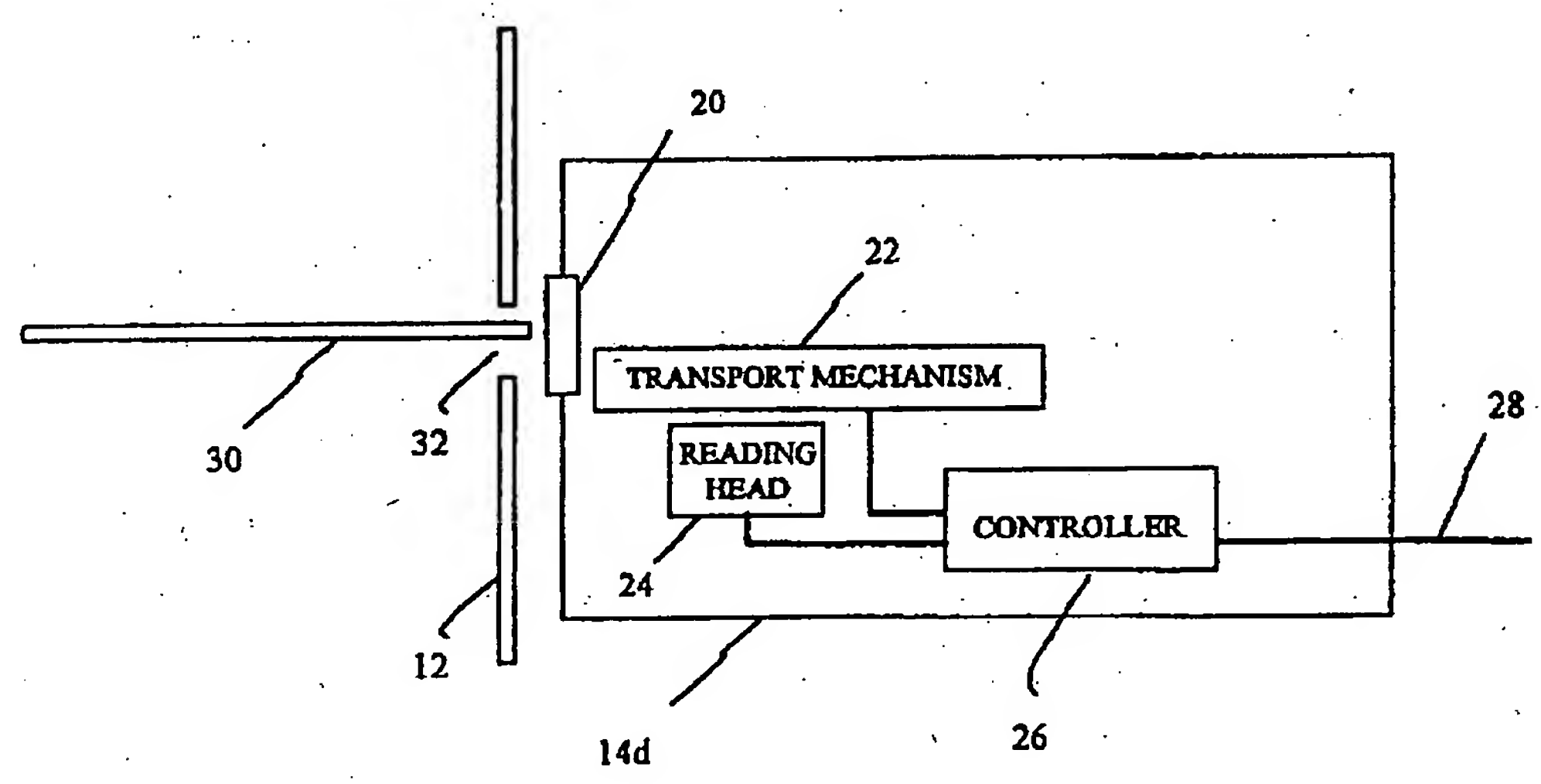
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(54) Title: MOTORIZED CARD READER MODULE



(57) Abstract: A motorised card reader module (14d) is described. The module (14d) has a transport system (22, 26) that is operable to transport a card (30) into the card reader module (14d) in a stop/start manner until the card (30) is fully enclosed by the card reader module (14d), and thereafter to transport the card (30) in a continuous manner so that a magnetic stripe on the card (30) can be accurately read by a reading head (24) in the module (14d), but not by a third party reading head located outside the module (14d). A method of preventing fraud at an SST, and an SST having a motorised card reader module are also described.



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MOTORISED CARD READER MODULE

The present invention relates to a motorised card reader module. The module may be for use in a self-service terminal (SST), such as an automated teller machine (ATM). The invention also relates to a method of preventing fraud at an SST.

One type of fraud that occurs at an ATM is for a third party to place a small module in front of the ATM's motorised card reader. The module is professionally designed so that it conforms to the appearance of the ATM and is not obvious to a user. The module generally has a magnetic head for reading the magnetic stripe commonly used on banking cards. The module also has electronics associated with the magnetic head for reading the data stored on the magnetic stripe, and has either a memory for storing the read data or transmission apparatus for transmitting the read data to the third party.

As the module is small, it does not impede insertion or removal of the user's card. When the user enters his card, the motorised card reader pulls the card in smoothly so that the genuine magnetic card reader can read the card. However, as the card is being pulled through the fraudulent module by the motorised card reader, the card reader in the fraudulent module reads the data on the magnetic stripe.

The user is unaware that his card has been read by the fraudulent module because the module is small and unobtrusive and because the module does not impede insertion or removal of the card. Once the card data is known, the third party can re-construct the user's card.

A variety of techniques may be used to obtain a user's PIN. For example, a false keypad overlay may be located above the actual keypad, such that when a user enters his PIN, the sequence of digits is recorded by the false keypad. Alternatively, a user may simply be observed while using the ATM and his PIN noted. If the third party can obtain the user's PIN, then the third party has both the card details and the PIN, thereby enabling the third party to generate a counterfeit card and to make withdrawals from the user's bank account without the user's knowledge.

According to a first aspect of the invention there is provided a motorised card reader module having a transport system characterised in that the transport system is operable to halt transport of a card on at least one occasion while the card is not fully enclosed by the card reader module.

Preferably, the transport system transports the card for a first time period during which the transport system is energised, and for a second time period during which the transport system is halted, and the system uses the first and second time periods alternately until the card is fully enclosed by the card reader. This has the effect of successively stopping and starting the card movement until the card is wholly within the card reader module. In a preferred embodiment, the first time period extends for between one and five milliseconds (1 to 5 msec), and the second time period extends for between ten and seventy milliseconds (10 to 70 msec). The first and second time periods may occur between five and thirty times.

It will be appreciated that once the card is wholly within the card reader module, the transport system transports the card in a continuous movement.

The transport system may transport the card for a third time period during which the card movement is in a reverse direction. The third time period may be used less frequently than the first and second time periods, alternatively or additionally, the third time period may be shorter than each of the first and second time periods.

Preferably, the first, second, and third time periods are very short, for example, less than 0.2 seconds each, to ensure that the non-uniform speed is not evident to a user.

Preferably, the first, second, and third time periods are controlled by a card reader controller that is used to control the transport system of the card reader.

The first, second, and third time periods may be generated randomly or pseudo-randomly.

On ejecting a card, the transport system may be operable to transport the card in a continuous movement when the card is inside and when the card is only partially inside the card reader module. Alternatively, on ejecting a card, the card reader may eject the card in a continuous movement until the card protrudes through the card reader module and thereafter halt the card on at least two occasions. In conventional motorised card readers, the card is halted on one occasion; that is, for presentation to the cardholder.

By virtue of this aspect of the invention any third party module located near to the entrance of the motorised

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card reader will not be able to read an inserted card accurately because the card has been stopped during transport. However, once the card is fully enclosed by the genuine card reader module, the card can be read because it is then being transported continuously.

According to a second aspect of the invention there is provided a motorised card reader module having a transport system characterised in that the transport system is operable to move a card in a stop/start manner until the card is fully enclosed by the card reader module.

The transport system may stop the movement of the card on only one occasion. Alternatively, and more preferably, the transport system may stop the movement of the card on multiple occasions, such as three or more occasions.

According to a third aspect of the invention there is provided a motorised card reader module having a transport system characterised in that the transport system is operable to move a card intermittently until the card is fully enclosed by the card reader module.

According to a fourth aspect of the invention there is provided a self-service terminal having a motorised card reader module, characterised in that the card reader module is operable to transport a card intermittently when the card is partially protruding from the card reader module, and to transport the card continuously when the card is fully enclosed by the card reader module.

According to a fifth aspect of the invention there is provided a method of preventing fraud at a self-service terminal, the method being characterised by the steps of:

receiving a card from a user, transporting the card into a card reader module in an intermittent movement while the card protrudes from the card reader module, and transporting the card in a continuous movement once the card is fully enclosed by the card reader module.

Once the card has been read by the card reader module, it is retained within the module until the transaction is completed, as in conventional SSTs.

These and other aspects of the present invention will be apparent from the following specific description, given by way of example, with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig 1 is a block diagram of an SST incorporating a motorised card reader module in accordance with one embodiment of the invention; and

Fig 2 is a simplified block diagram of the motorised card reader module of Fig 1.

Referring to Fig 1, there is shown a public access SST 10 in the form of an ATM in accordance with an embodiment of the present invention. The ATM 10 has a user interface 12 and seven modules 14 interconnected by a proprietary network 16.

The modules 14 comprise a terminal controller 14a, a display 14b, an encrypting keypad 14c, a card reader 14d (such as a Sankyo motorised card reader module), a journal printer 14e, a receipt printer 14f, and a cash dispenser 14g. The modules 14 operate in a master/slave relationship, where the controller 14a is the master that controls the operation of the other modules 14b to 14g. However, each of

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the other modules 14b to 14g has a processor for operating on received data and for performing the specific functions of that module 14.

Journal printer 14e is internal to the ATM 10 and is used by the owner of the ATM 10 for reconciling transaction data, and by ATM service personnel in the event of a malfunction.

Referring to Fig 2, there is shown a simplified block diagram of the card reader module 14d aligned with the user interface 12. Module 14d has an entry/exit slot 20 for receiving a card into and for ejecting a card from the module 14d. Slot 20 includes a pair of rollers (not shown) to guide an inserted card onto a transport mechanism 22. Transport mechanism 22 conveys a card between the entry/exit slot 20 and a magnetic card reading head 24. The card reading head 24 and the transport mechanism are both controlled by a controller 26. The controller 26 and transport mechanism 22 form a transport system.

The controller 26 is implemented in hardware and software, and is responsible for activating the transport mechanism, interfacing with the terminal controller 14a (Fig 1), and sending information received from the reading head 24 to the terminal controller 14a via output 28. Controller 26 may also implement encryption to provide security for the information sent to the terminal controller 14a.

Referring to both Figs 1 and 2, in use, a user inserts his banking card 30 into a card reader slot 32 in the user interface 12. The card reader slot 32 is aligned with entry/exit slot 20, so that on inserting his card 30, the card 30 is pinched by the rollers (not shown) in the card

reader module 14d and guided to the transport mechanism 22. The controller 26 activates the transport mechanism 22 for a first time period, which typically lasts for 0.2 seconds, the controller 26 then de-activates the transport mechanism for a second time period, which typically lasts 0.1 seconds. The controller 26 continually activates and de-activates mechanism 22 until the card 30 is fully enclosed by the module 14d; this ensures that the card 30 is transported in a start/stop manner. Thereafter, the controller 26 activates the mechanism 22 to ensure that the card 30 is transported continuously. This enables card reading head 24 to read the magnetic stripe (not shown) on the card 30 accurately. Conventional card reader modules 14d have a plurality of different sensors for detecting when the card 30 is fully enclosed by the card reader module 14d. For example, a sensor (not shown) is used to close a shutter once the card 30 is fully enclosed. This shutter is opened prior to ejecting the card 30. This sensor (not shown) could be used by the controller 26 to change the transport system from start/stop mode to continuous mode.

Once a transaction (for example, withdrawal of cash) is complete and the card 30 is to be returned prior to dispensing the cash, the controller 26 activates the transport mechanism 22 so that the card 30 is ejected from the module 14d until it protrudes through the slot 32 in user interface 12. Once a part of the card 30 protrudes through the entry/exit slot 20, the controller 26 alternately activates and de-activates the transport mechanism 22 to ensure that any third party card reader located near the slot 32 in the user interface 12 is not able to read the ejected card 30, thereby preventing fraud.

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It will be appreciated that by transporting the card 30 intermittently (in a start/stop manner) while the card is protruding from the module 14d, and continuously while the card is fully enclosed by the module 14d, a magnetic stripe on the card 30 can be accurately read by the reading head 24 in the module 14d, but not by a third party reading head located outside the module 14d. This is because a card reading head cannot read a magnetic stripe on a card unless the card is moving continuously to provide the reading head with a reference. This embodiment reduces the possibility of fraud.

It should be appreciated that when a card is being transported continuously the speed of transport may vary during the continuous transport, but the speed of transport does not drop to zero. When a card is transported intermittently, the speed of transport drops to zero on at least one occasion.

Various modifications may be made to the above described embodiment within the scope of the invention. For example, a magnetic card other than a banking card may be used, such as a loyalty card. In other embodiments, more or less than two time periods may be used. In other embodiments, the control of the time periods may be performed by hardware, firmware, software, or a combination of these.

Claims

1. A motorised card reader module (14d) having a transport system (22,26) characterised in that the transport system (22,26) is operable to halt transport of a card (30) on at least one occasion while the card (30) is not fully enclosed by the card reader module (14d).
2. A card reader module according to claim 1, wherein the transport system (22,26) transports the card (30) for a first time period during which the transport system is energised, and for a second time period during which the transport system is halted, and the system uses the first and second time periods alternately until the card is fully enclosed by the card reader module (14d).
3. A card reader module according to claim 2, wherein the transport system transports the card for a third time period during which the card movement is in a reverse direction.
4. A card reader module according to claim 3, wherein the third time period is used less frequently than the first and second time periods.
5. A card reader module according to claim 4, wherein the first, second, and third time periods are controlled by a card reader controller that is used to control the transport system of the card reader.
6. A card reader module according to any of claims 3, 4, or 5, wherein the first, second, and third time periods are generated randomly.
7. A card reader module according to any preceding claim, wherein the transport system (22,26) is operable to

eject the card in a continuous movement until the card (30) protrudes through the card reader module (14d) and thereafter to halt the card (30) on at least two occasions.

8. A method of preventing fraud at a self-service terminal, the method being characterised by the steps of: receiving a card from a user, transporting the card into a card reader module in an intermittent movement while the card protrudes from the card reader module, and transporting the card in a continuous movement once the card is enclosed by the card reader module.

9. A self-service terminal (10) having a motorised card reader module (14d), characterised in that the card reader module (14d) is operable to transport a card (30) intermittently when the card (30) is partially protruding from the card reader module (14d), and to transport the card (30) continuously when the card (30) is fully enclosed by the card reader module (14d).

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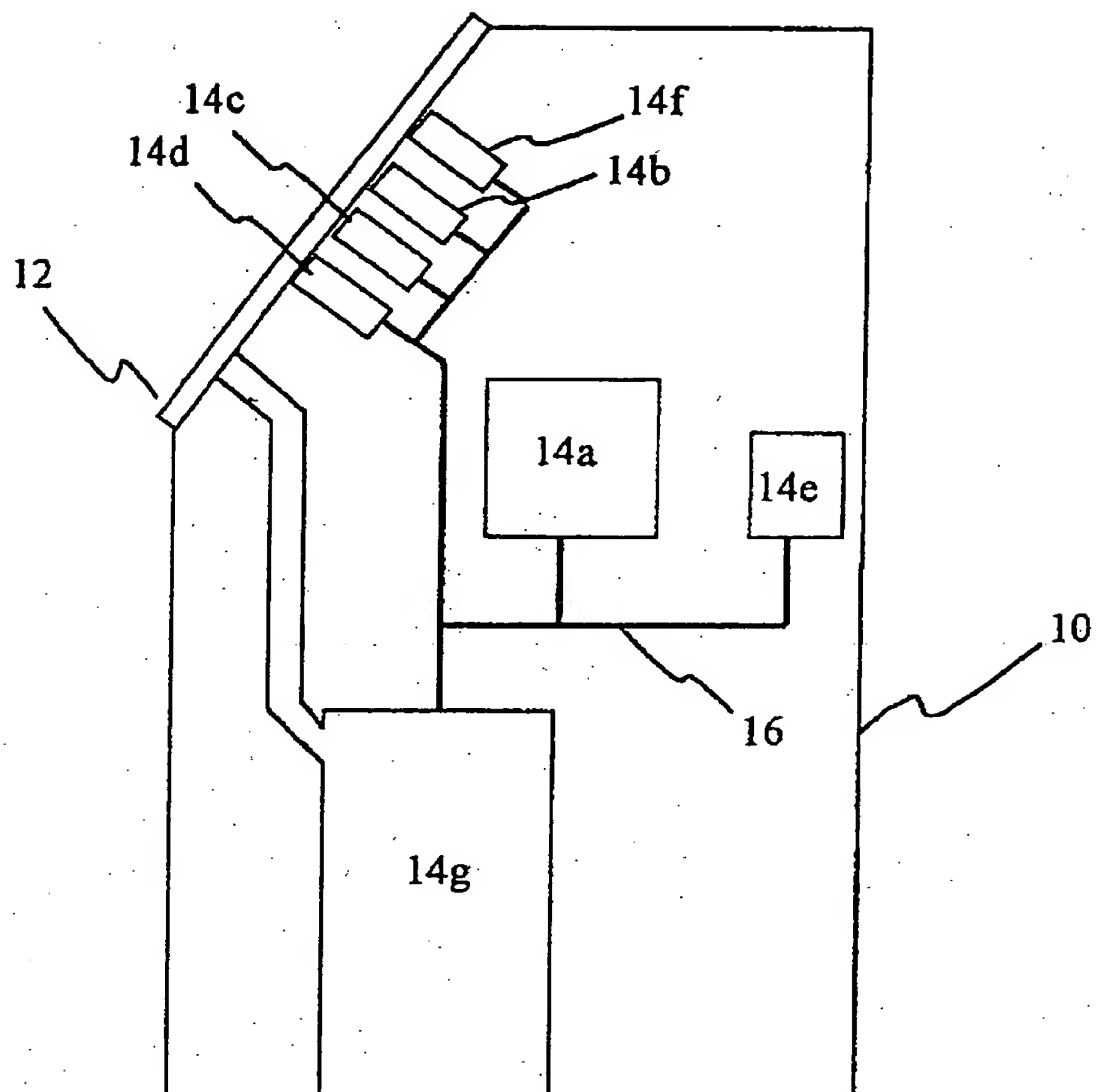


Fig 1

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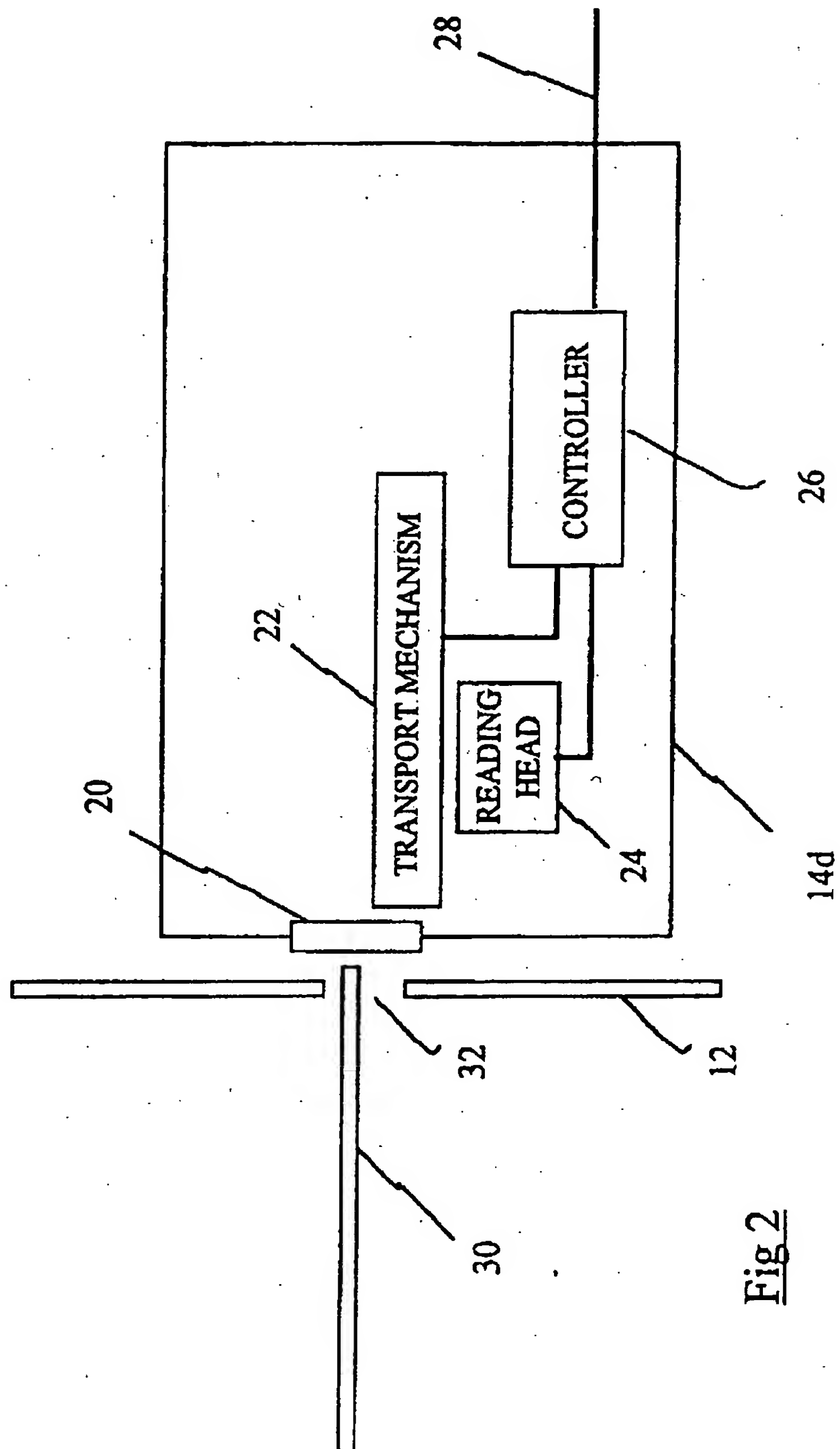


Fig 2

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Intern: al Application No
PCT/GB 00/01993

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER
IPC 7 G06K13/08 G06K7/08

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC

B. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols)

IPC 7 G06K

Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched

Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practical, search terms used)

IBM-TDB, EPO-Internal

C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	SVIGALS J: "Unauthorized Card Stripe Reading Inhibitor" IBM TECHNICAL DISCLOSURE BULLETIN, vol. 26, no. 6, 1 November 1983 (1983-11-01), page 2707 XP002145300 New York, US paragraph '0001! paragraph '0003!, sentence 8	1,2,7-9
X	FR 2 720 851 A (CGA HBS) 8 December 1995 (1995-12-08) page 2, line 14 - line 32 figure 1	1-5

☒ Further documents are listed in the continuation of box C.

☒ Patent family members are listed in annex.

*** Special categories of cited documents :**

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INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No
PCT/GB 00/01993

G.(Continuation) DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT

Category *	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X	US 4 007 356 A (STUCKE ARTHUR W ET AL) 8 February 1977 (1977-02-08) column 1, line 44 -column 2, line 10 figure 1 -----	1-3

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

Information on patent family members

International Application No

PCT/GB 00/01993

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